

WITHHOLDING TAX REPEAL

Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts. Mr. President, I rise in support of H.R. 674. The vote we have tonight is finally an opportunity to pass a truly bipartisan jobs bill, part of the President's jobs package. As I said when we held the first vote to try to repeal the 3-percent withholding tax a couple weeks ago, this vote is a no-brainer. It is pretty simple. Unfortunately, some Members objected to a small portion of that bill, the offset. That should not be a concern this time. The bill we will be voting on shortly just passed the House with 405 votes, and when is the last time we heard that? The bill we are going to vote on today has a new offset that has been endorsed by the President, so I say let's get it done.

If we pass it, every company that does business with the government can go back to thinking about hiring new workers rather than worrying about losing 3 percent of the value of their contracts right upfront, right in the beginning. If we pass it, State and local governments will not be saddled with another costly and unfunded mandate. As I said before, it is a no-brainer. If we pass it, we will finally repeal a tax that costs the government billions more to implement than it actually raises in revenue.

Let's pass this bill and let's end this stealth tax that is extremely expensive to implement and punishes many for the bad acts of a few.

That being said, as we know, we have Veterans Day fast approaching. I thank all of our men and women who have served and continue to serve. I cannot think of anything more meaningful than to come together in a truly bipartisan, bicameral way to help our jobless veterans. Unemployment and homelessness among our Active-Duty veterans and members of the National Guard and Reserves are a national disgrace and we can do better. We should not leave anyone behind. The Active-Duty soldiers and members of the Guard and Reserves fight side by side for our freedom. They face danger together, they are wounded together, and they should be treated as equals when it comes to helping them find jobs.

Back in January, I introduced the Hire-a-Hero Act with Senator KAY HAGAN. It expands the work opportunity tax credit to help companies put our veterans and members of the Guard and Reserves back to work. The President has proposed a similar action in his jobs bill. It did not include guardsmen and reservists, and that is why I hope when we take up the veterans package that I hear is being discussed, the majority leader will actually allow for that to be included. Our guardsmen and reservists, once again, deserve better.

It is time for our Senate colleagues to rally behind the men and women who have served and continue to serve. They are leaving the service and need this opportunity right now. The unemployment rate for veterans is more

than 12 percent. For members of the Guard and Reserves, it is twice the national average, as high as 20 percent in some areas. We need to treat this as a truly bipartisan and hopefully bicameral effort. It is something the American people are yearning for. They are looking for us to show leadership, to actually work together. If we can't work together with our heroes who have served and given to our country at its time of need, then I am not quite sure what we will be able to work on together.

If we do these two things, repeal the 3-percent withholding and help our veterans in 1 day, potentially 1 week, maybe it will usher in a new era of good will, something I know the Chair and I have worked to establish, as have so many other people in this historic Chamber. One good deed can lead to another good deed and that good deed can lead to another good deed, and so on.

Let's start working together. The American people are demanding it. As I have said before, we are Americans first. I may be a Republican—and I am proud to be Republican—but we are Americans first. I am way more proud to be an American. I hope others in this historic Chamber feel the same way and we can put our party differences aside and do something very important for not only our businesses in this country but also for the ones who have given so much in their service to our great Nation while serving in the military.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

ANN MARTIN

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to continue an initiative that was actually started by the Presiding Officer's predecessor, Senator Kaufman, whereby on a fairly regular basis I try to come down and recognize the service of one of our incredible Federal employees. We spend a lot of time in this body talking about policy. We oftentimes spend a lot of time also talking about what government does wrong. There are things government does wrong, but too often we don't acknowledge what government does right, particularly the incredible service many of the folks who work for our Federal Government perform.

Today, I am pleased to honor another great Federal employee, Ms. Ann Martin. Ms. Martin is the Senior Intelligence Research Specialist for the

Treasury Department's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network or FinCEN. She worked with Mexican officials to help disrupt the laundering of billions of dollars derived from illegal U.S. narcotics sales.

At the age of 29—as the Presiding Officer may recall when he was that age—Ms. Martin led a team of financial experts to compile and analyze hundreds of pieces of data. Her research analysis gave unprecedented insight into how Mexican drug cartels finance their operations in both Mexico and the United States. It also provided American and Mexican law enforcement authorities with a number of leads into cross-border money laundering and transnational organized crime groups.

Discussing Ms. Martin's work, James Freis, the Director of FinCEN, explained that “no one had ever put together a picture of this kind of financial movement across our borders.” In other words, nobody put together in an organized way the kinds of activities in which some of these drug cartels were involved.

The exhaustive and comprehensive analysis Ms. Martin conducted supported the Mexican Government's decision in June 2010 to issue new regulations to restrict the amount of U.S. dollars that could be deposited into Mexican banks. As a result, more than 700 suspicious activity reports have been filed from Mexican banks. In other words, we have gotten the leads on 700 potential activities that are now being investigated due to Ms. Martin's work.

While her time working for the Federal Government has been relatively brief, she has already made a major impact. Karen Fleischer, the Deputy Associate Director at FinCEN, had this to say:

I've been in government for 35-plus years and Ann is the kind of person that you want to hold up as an example for others. She is extremely dedicated to the agency's mission.

I hope my colleagues will join me in honoring Ms. Martin, a fellow Virginian, for the excellent work she has done and her commitment to public service.

I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is now closed.